

CENTRAL BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT  
FORT SMITH, ARKANSAS

Tuesday, September 18, 2018  
Area Agency on Aging building, 524 Garrison Avenue  
Fort Smith, Arkansas  
7<sup>th</sup> Floor Board Room

Meeting Minutes

The Fort Smith Central Business Improvement District Commission's regular meeting was scheduled for 9:30 a.m. on Tuesday, September 18, 2018 in the 7<sup>th</sup> floor board room of the Area Agency on Aging building, 524 Garrison Avenue, Fort Smith, Arkansas.

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Bill Hanna, Chairperson, at 9:30 a.m. and a quorum was noted present. Also in attendance were commissioners Steve Clark, Lee Ann Vick, Rodney Ghan and Jeff Pryor. Commissioners Richard Griffin, Phil White and Sam Sicard were absent and excused. Others in attendance included Brenda Andrews, Doug Reinert and Jeff Dingman of the City of Fort Smith.

Mr. Ghan moved approval of the minutes of the August 21, 2018 regular meeting. Mr. Pryor seconded, and the motion carried by unanimous vote.

The commissioners reviewed the Treasurer's report for the month of August 2018, such documents being previously provided by Mr. Sicard for the commissioners' review. As of August 31, 2018, the Total Cash-on-Hand for the CBID amounted to \$74,081.08. Restricted funds comprise \$5,439.90 of the total cash. The total cash net of restricted funds is \$68,641.18. No action was taken.

Mr. Hanna introduced Talicia Richardson, Executive Director of 64.6 Downtown, for an update on activities. Mrs. Richardson reported that The Unexpected project will happen the week of October 22-28, and more detailed information will be out in early October regarding the specific installations for this year.

64.6 Downtown will host an "Invest Fort Smith" moderated summit the afternoon of Tuesday, October 30 from 11:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Mrs. Richardson noted that Rex Nelson and Roby Brock have agreed to moderate different panel discussions at the event. CBID members, as well as other downtown property owners, are invited to attend and hear discussions about challenges and opportunities related to property management, landlord/tenant issues, construction/rehabilitation, and collaborative approaches to marketing downtown properties. Invitations will be sent regionally, and tickets for the event are \$25, which includes lunch.

Mrs. Richardson noted that she is conducting one-on-one meetings with individual CBID members and formulating an agenda for the November 8 CBID work session that she will moderate. The draft agenda for the meeting will be forwarded to Mr. Hanna for review, possibly by the end of the week. A venue for the session is still to be determined. She noted that communications from 64.6 Downtown to the CBID Commission will be conducted through Mr. Dingman, as liaison to both the CBID Commission and the City, so that collaboration among the three entities can easily continue.

Mr. Clark asked about the status of prior discussions related to police presence in the downtown district. Mrs. Richardson noted the concern, and recent discussions with Mr. Dingman on the same topic. Mr. Dingman relayed that the Police Department continues its recruiting efforts to fill its vacant positions and is having some success. Police Chief Clark and the Police Department are aware of the need and will

continue to evaluate patrol assignments as manpower increases. Mr. Dingman will meet with the Police Department later this week and mention this item. Mr. Bobby Aldridge noted that police responses to concerns at his family's business downtown is excellent.

Mr. Ghan asked if landlords or real estate representatives can send potential tenants or buyers to Mrs. Richardson for third-party discussions about activities, plans, and happenings in the downtown district. Mrs. Richardson replied affirmatively and reinforced that that is specifically a role she is trying to fill as the representative of 64.6 Downtown. She also noted that Open Houses of available downtown commercial or residential properties could be held in conjunction with other events, such as the Downtown Business Association's First Tuesday event, so that landlords/sellers can take advantage of increased traffic to show off available spaces.

Doug Reinert, the city's Director of Parks & Recreation, presented an update on city projects. The Greg Smith River Trail Phase III is finally complete, with the final walkthrough last week. The Parks Department will work with the Frontier MPO to install bicycle traffic counters at different points of the trail to gauge overall usage, but the 7.25-mile trail stretching from downtown to Fort Smith Park is being well-used. The city's splash pads will stay open as long as weather permits before being shut down for the winter.

The Bike/Skate Park is very near completion. Mr. Reinert asked Mr. Aldridge to report on the status. Mr. Aldridge indicated that the park is scheduled for a "soft-opening" in seven to ten days, pending the status of the remaining landscaping that needs to be installed. The recent hot, dry weather has proven challenging to installing plants & landscaping. Mr. Clark asked about the status of the irrigation, to which Mr. Aldridge replied that all has been taken care of. Frank Sharum donated a good number of additional trees for the site, that were outside of the original plans, and the additional irrigation that is needed for the trees will also be added due to additional donations from the private sector. All of the finishing touches are being addressed, including lights/timers, and the public's anticipation is high for the completion of this project. The park is already being used after hours, even though it is still a construction site and not open to the public. A Grand Opening event has been scheduled for October 13.

The CBID reviewed a proposal from KMW Properties regarding the proposed landscape plan for "The Bakery" project at 63 South 6<sup>th</sup> Street. Brenda Andrews noted that the landscaping plan was submitted for CBID review and information but complies with all aspects of the city's Unified Development Ordinance and requires no variances or specific CBID approval. No action was taken.

Mrs. Reese Brewer of the Frontier MPO reported that they are excited about installing their new bike traffic counters on the city's trails, and she is currently working through the details of a recent technical assistance grant for issues related to the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration.

The next meeting of the CBID Commission is scheduled for October 16, 2018. The strategic planning session will be November 8, and the November regular meeting is scheduled for November 20. There being no additional business before the Commission, the meeting adjourned at approximately 10:05 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Jeff Dingman". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style. Below the signature is a horizontal line.

Jeff Dingman  
Deputy City Administrator